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ABSTRACT

This paper provides an overview of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) Division III, a forum for the IFLA sections and round tables comprising libraries serving the general public, as well as special library services directed to specific groups of the general public, such as children, linguistic minorities, people with disabilities, and people in hospitals or prisons. Information about the goals, projects, and publications of the following sections and round tables is presented: Section of Public Libraries; Section of School Libraries and Resource Centres; Section of Libraries for Children and Young Adults; Section for Libraries Serving Disadvantaged Persons; Section of Libraries for the Blind; Section on Library Services to Multicultural Populations; Round Table--International Association of Metropolitan City Libraries (INTAMEL); Round Table on Mobile Libraries; and Round Table on National Centres for Library Services (ROTNAC). (MES)

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Conference Proceedings

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The division of libraries serving the general public - a survey

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Ilona Glashoff
Chair of Division III

Abstract

A short presentation of the structure of this division with highlights of their work.

Paper

The Division is a forum for the IFLA Sections and Round Tables comprising libraries serving the general public as well as (special) library services directed to specific groups of the general public, such as: children, linguistic minorities, people with disabilities, people in hospitals or prisons.

The Division promotes the improvement of library services and information to all people, and co-ordinates the activities of it's Sections, Round Tables and Working Groups. In recent years the Sections and Round Tables have worked cross-divisional and are co-operating in arranging joint meetings during the annual conferences.

The Division continues to be concerned that IFLA promotes literacy and reading promotion through libraries. This basic idea of libraries playing a more important role in combating illiteracy throughout the world is supported both by IFLA Professional and Executive Board.

The Division has also, together with the Section of Public Libraries, contributed to the revision and promotion of the UNESCO Public Library Manifesto and encourages the use of appropriate information and communication technologies to provide and develop services to the public.

The Division consists of nine Sections and Round Tables. This paper gives a survey of the

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scopes, goals and current projects of the different bodies. Most of the Sections and Round Tables also regularly publish newsletters presenting trends and activities. Information about the Sections and Round Tables can also be found in the IFLANET and many of the sections have their own homepage.

SECTION OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES

The section provides an active international forum for the development and promotion of public libraries which serve the whole community in the context of the information society and ensure free and equal access to information at the local level.

Goals:

- To promote equal access for all to information at a local level and ensure public libraries are part of the national library network.
- To promote and make recommendations on the role of the public library in supporting lifelong learning and encourage information and computer literacy among public library users.
- To promote the effective provision of information technology and multimedia in public libraries, based on different levels of the development, including the enhancement of the skills of staff and users in their effective implementation and use.
- To promote the development of public library standards, the use of quality management and performance measurement in public libraries and encourage research into their funding models and the collection and dissemination of the comparative public library statistics.
- To support action to combat illiteracy through the use of public libraries in conjunction with other appropriate bodies within and outside IFLA.
- To promote the importance of the public library as a place for people to meet, communicate and exchange ideas and as a centre for cultural and leisure activities at the local level.
- To disseminate information about the effects on public libraries world-wide of copyright regulations.
- To arrange seminars on public library services and policy, particularly in developing countries, which will lead to an improvement in public library provision.

Projects:

- Survey of National Information Policies
- Revision of Public Library Standards and Guidelines
- IFLA Regional Conference on Public Libraries : Seminar in Africa
- UNESCO Model Library Project UNET
- Public Libraries and Lifelong Learning - a feasibility study to prepare guidelines on public libraries and lifelong learning

Publications:

- Newsletter
- UNESCO Public Library Manifesto: available in 22 languages (Print and Web-site)
- Proceedings of the Noordwijk Seminar, August 1998. (IFLA Professional Report 1999)

SECTION OF SCHOOL LIBRARIES AND RESOURCE CENTRES

The section is concerned with improving and developing school libraries all over the world. Adequate staffing by qualified personnel is advocated. The section provides an international forum for exchanging ideas, experiences , research results and advocacy.

The vital role of school libraries in an information-oriented society is important in teaching and learning and enabling individuals to live and participate in a democratic world.

Goals:

- To promote and advocate the role of the school library and resource centre.
- To delineate the role of the school librarian.
- To assist school librarians in their professional development.
- To promote and disseminate research in the field of school librarianship.

Projects:

- UNESCO School Library Manifesto
- Guidelines for School Libraries (revision of ed. 1990)

Publications:

- Newsletter

SECTION OF LIBRARIES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS

The section's major purpose is to support the provision of the library service and reading promotion to children and young adults throughout the world.

Its main objectives are to promote international co-operation in the fields of library services to children and young adults, to encourage the exchange of experience, education and training and research in all aspects of this subject. The section's concerns include the provision of library services to all children and young adults in different culture and traditions in co-operation with appropriate organisations and to adults interacting with children and young adults.

Goals:

- To promote literacy for a reading society.
- To encourage a relevant integration of changing technologies in libraries for children and young adults.
- To advocate for the children's right to information, according to the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- To encourage international networking among professionals and researchers of children's literature, multimedia and children's library services in general.
- To articulate the role of the librarians in the future.
- To encourage the production and study of children's literature and multimedia.

Projects:

- Post Conference Seminar, Bangkok 1999 "Informal Programmes to Support Reading and Libraries in Developing Communities
- Children's Literature Abstracts: magazine containing abstracts of international publications of children's libraries
- Books for All
  Ongoing project in co-operation with UNESCO: collecting and distributing money for children's books and libraries in Third World countries.

Publications:

- Newsletter
- Guidelines for Library Services for Young Adults: available in many languages

- International Research Abstract: Youth Library Services (IRAYLS): database containing abstracts of international publications of children's libraries. (Floppy disc; Internet)
- Children's Literature Abstracts: a magazine.

SECTION FOR LIBRARIES SERVING DISADVANTAGES PERSONS

This section is concerned with library and information services to all the groups within the community who for whatever reason, are unable to make use of conventional library services. These groups include people in hospitals and prisons, elderly people who may be in nursing homes or care facilities, house-bound people with hearing impairments and those who are physically and developmentally disabled.

This section provides an international forum for the discussion of ideas, sharing of experiences and development of projects designed to promote and improve the effectiveness of library and information services to such groups.

Goals:

- To promote the availability of and access to suitable resources for people who require alternative materials and/or services.
- To develop guidelines for access to library collections and services for people who are unable to make use of conventional library resources, including the provision of appropriate aids.
- To encourage research into the status of library and information services to the disadvantaged.
- To raise professional awareness and promote the development of appropriate staff training.
- To develop guidelines to specific types of services.
- To disseminate and share information amongst relevant organisations, both internal and external to IFLA.
- To study the impact of technological developments and the electronic environment upon library and information services to disadvantaged users.
- To improve membership of the section and maintain as broad an international representation as possible.

Projects:

- Revision of Guidelines for Library Services to Deaf People
- Translation of Guidelines for Easy-to-Read Materials
- Guidelines for Services to Hospital Patient
- International Resource Book for Libraries Serving Disadvantaged Persons
- Guidelines for Library Services to People with Dyslexia

Publications:

- Newsletter
- Guidelines for Easy-to-Read Publications: available in English and Spanish

SECTION OF LIBRARIES FOR THE BLIND

The section concerns itself with library services for the blind and other print-handicapped readers. The main purpose of the section are to promote national and international co-operation in this field and to encourage research and development in all aspects of this area, thus improving the access of information for the blind and other print-handicapped persons.

The section is thus concerned with the implementation of the goals, standardisation of

material, problems of copyright, bibliographic control, technical standards, free transmission of postal and telecommunications or any means of distribution of material, and the identification of the locations of special format collections and activities for the blind and other print-handicapped readers.

Goals:

- To encourage the establishment of library service to print handicapped persons in countries where it does not exist or is inadequate , thus bridging the information gap.
- Establishment of guidelines for library services for print handicapped persons.
- To provide proactive leadership in the evolution of the digital library for the visually handicapped.
- To reduce the major obstacles for free international flow of special format, such as copyright regulations, technical standards, postal regulations etc.
- To promote the use of cataloguing standards to make alterate material accessible.
- To encourage the training and continuing education of professionals in the field service to print handicapped readers.
- To promote international interlibrary loan materials for print handicapped readers.
- To provide information about the work of the section and the Standing Committee to those interested in library services to the blind and other print handicapped.
- To co-operate with appropriate international organisations, by recognising the need of users, and by promoting co-operation between libraries serving print handicapped readers and user organisations.

Projects:

Publication and printing of the "Guidelines for Library Services to Braille Users"

Publications:

- Newsletter
- Guidelines for Library Services to Braille Users

SECTION ON LIBRARY SERVICES TO MULTICULTURAL POPULATIONS

The section brings together libraries and institutions interested in the development and availability of library services designed to meet the needs of cultural and linguistic minorities.

The section is striving to share its experience in library services to multicultural populations in view of the necessity to ensure that every member in our global society has access to a full range of library and information services. In order to achieve this, it promotes international co-operation in this field.

Goals:

- To promote the idea of diversity by making information available on library provision, practice and materials in all formats for linguistic and cultural minorities for librarians planning and carrying out the provision of such services.
- To work towards the integration of multicultural and multilingual services into the general management of libraries. Combat racism among library workers and management, and promote an enlightened approach to racial matters in the library services.
- To promote the application of library services to multicultural populations through IFLA programmes and in research projects.
- To encourage the employment of linguistic and cultural minorities in libraries by urging

the library community to provide equitable access to jobs.
- To encourage libraries to train local staff on multicultural issues.
- To promote the teaching of library services to multicultural populations in library and information studies departments of universities and colleges throughout the world.
- Reinforce the co-operation with other sections of IFLA by launching a multi-section project focused on the concept of multicultural librarian ship in a network environment.
- Improve the participation of every member of the section by conducting a survey on their expectations about the section's activities.
- To advocate the co-development of multicultural services in public libraries of developed and developing countries.
- To advocate cultural and educational policies designed to fight illiteracy and promote reading in all languages.
- To advocate equitable access to new information technologies for linguistic minorities.

Projects: ---

Publications:

- Newsletter
- Multicultural Communities: Guidelines for Library Services (revised, 2nd edition)

ROUND TABLE - INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF METROPOLITAN CITY LIBRARIES (INTAMEL)

The round table aims to be a platform primarily for libraries of cities with 400.000 or more inhabitants, although libraries serving wide and diverse geographical areas with the same and more population may be included. Members exchange ideas and information on a range of professional topics which include: library networks; buildings; automation; research; and service to special groups.

Goals:

- To seek inclusions in IFLA home page
- To increase membership
- To maintain annual conferences (1999 in Zurich, 2000 in St. Louis)
- To organise exchanges of appropriate staff for personal and professional development. To refine comparative statistics
- To co-operate with related IFLA professional groups
- To subsidise conference attendance by delegates from developing countries

ROUND TABLE ON MOBILE LIBRARIES

The round table is concerned with all aspects of mobile library operations, collections, services, education and training, and research in all geographic areas.

Goals:

- To promote the importance and value of mobile libraries for effecting equity of access to information for all residents, particularly in remote and rural areas.
- To disseminate information world-wide on best-practices in mobile library services.
- To promote regional, national and international initiatives to improve/create literacy and library services via mobile library services.
- To promote collaboration across types of libraries, including mobile libraries, to provide access in information for lifelong learning.
- To advocate the use of mobile libraries to serve the needs of special populations such as women, families, indigenous people, unemployed, school dropouts and the elderly.

Projects:

- Best Practices in Mobile Libraries
- A Book Mobile to Sami Communities
- An International Study of Mobile Libraries

Publications:

- Newsletter

ROUND TABLE ON NATIONAL CENTRES FOR LIBRARY SERVICES (ROTNAC)

The round table brings together organisations operating on a national scale and providing a range of products in the field of bibliographical services and/or lending materials to libraries. The round table functions as a platform for the managers of the National Centres as well as a meeting point for bilateral co-operation.

Goals:

- To improve local library service through the use of central services and promote central services.
- To exchange information between members about the marketing, products, application of information technology, and management of centres.
- To promote co-operation between members.

Publications:

- Newsletter

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